

Amsterdam plans to ban smoking of weed from Red Light District streets

BY HANNAH SAMPSON

In their latest effort to rein in carousing visitors, Amsterdam officials recently announced plans to tamp down disruptive behavior in the city's Red Light District, including barring pot-smoking on the streets, reducing hours for restaurants and brothels, and tightening some alcohol restrictions.

The rules are meant to ease the effects of hordes of some-

times-rowdy tourists on people who live in the area. An announcement from the city council referenced an alcohol- and drug-fueled atmosphere at night that makes the neighborhood unsafe and prevents residents from sleeping.

Officials are taking public comments on many of the proposed measures before finalizing amendments to municipal by-laws.

Under the recently announced

measures, the smoking ban would go into effect in mid-May. The city could take more action if the ban doesn't go far enough to reduce nuisance behavior.

Also under consideration: banning to-go sales of drugs at coffee shops at certain times and potentially restricting smoking on cafe terraces.

The Netherlands has a tolerance policy for weed, meaning people will not be prosecuted for buying up to five grams of cannabis, which is classified as a "soft drug" and is sold in coffee shops. Only visitors 18 and older can enter cannabis cafes, which are not allowed to sell alcohol. Although weed can be consumed in coffee shops, most clubs or bars do not allow people to smoke pot on-site.

The city issues permits for

brothels and sex clubs to operate. Under rules that had already been decided, brothels will only be able to stay open until 3 a.m., not the 6 a.m. closing time in place now. Restaurants and sex establishments with catering licenses will have to close at 2 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, rather than 3 or 4 a.m.

No new visitors would be allowed into businesses with a catering license after 1 a.m., the English-language publication NL Times reported. The time changes would go into effect April 1, the publication said.

Officials also want to close terraces at 1 a.m. in summer, a change from the previous closing time of 2 a.m.

Alcohol sales at stores and cafeterias in the district will continue to be blocked starting

at 4 p.m. from Thursday through Sunday. The city says alcohol displays must also be removed from the shops or hidden from view. Visitors are already not allowed to drink on the streets.

Amsterdam has tried for years to address overtourism concerns, restricting some tours of the historic Red Light District before the pandemic and voting to move sex workers to an erotic center outside of the district in 2021. According to a November story in the Guardian, however, residents of the proposed neighborhoods for relocation don't want the businesses — and the workers also don't want to move.

Late last year, authorities said they planned to take steps to combat tourism problems, including limiting river cruises,

curbing rowdy bachelor parties, cracking down on organized pub crawls and taking other measures. Part of the plan included some of the rules announced recently, such as reducing hours for sex businesses and catering establishments and banning smoking in some parts of the city.

A campaign is expected to start this year discouraging global visitors who want to party hard in the city.

"Amsterdammers live in every neighbourhood, including the Red Light District and Leidseplein," says the official visitor information site I Amsterdam. "Limit noise and drunkenness, clean up your mess and don't pee in the canals. Keep in mind the locals and they will welcome you with open arms."

File with
Debra Rog

NYT 12-31-22

Wait, Is My Dog Stoned?

Jean Hanff Korelitz

The author of the novels "The Latecomer" and "The Plot."

ON THANKSGIVING morning, our dog, Sherlock, ate his usual breakfast and went for his usual walk, on which he performed his usual bodily functions before returning to his usual spot on his (that is, our) bed.

"Something's wrong with Sherlock," my son announced an hour later, after which the dog bolted into the room and began to jerk uncontrollably. We tried to calm him down, but he was twitching violently and was plainly terrified. Briefly, I persuaded myself that he was experiencing some comical form of hiccups, but even I, with my considerable aptitude for self-delusion, had to give that up as he shook and flinched. Finally, my husband and I bowed to the inevitable. We had to get Sherlock to a veterinary emergency room.

As we made our way to the Schwarzman Animal Medical Center in Manhattan, I tried to prepare myself. Whatever this was, it wasn't going to be benign. My money was on something neurological, but what came on like this, out of the blue? A brain tumor? A stroke? (Do dogs even have strokes?) Could it be something crazily exotic, like kuru? (I once read a book about it, a prion disease from Papua New Guinea acquired from the ritualized consumption of dead relatives' brains.)

Years ago, I had a sweet dog named Angus that began frantically turning circles one morning and by the end of that day was in terminal organ failure. As we drove through Central Park, I was bracing for something along those lines.

Here's the diagnosis I wasn't expecting, which Sherlock received on arrival in the E.R.: acute cannabis intoxication from something — likely the butt of a joint — he had gobbled up off the street.

In the past couple of months, two dispensaries opened on my block on the Upper West Side, and that's in addition to the mobile store that appeared last year. All three seem to be thriving — not a surprise in a neighborhood with plenty of college students and left-leaning voters (a constituency to which I belong). I never thought twice about any of it until my dog nearly died.

According to Dr. Carly Fox, a senior veterinarian at Schwarzman, marijuana toxicity is now a common presentation in veterinary emergency rooms. Severity depends on the amount ingested and the size, age and health of the animal, and most dogs exhibit

I knew to steer Sherlock away from many sidewalk hazards, but not weed.

uncoordinated gait, dribbling urine, an exaggerated reaction to normal stimuli — that would be the flinching and trembling — bradycardia (low heart rate) and mild hypothermia. Severe cases progress to respiratory depression, seizures and occasionally death.

On the plus side, most vets have now seen enough cannabis poisoning to know what it looks like. The Animal Poison Control Center reported an increase of 765 percent in calls about pets ingesting marijuana from 2008 to 2018, well before the mobile dispensary arrived on my block, let alone the two brick-and-mortar locations. From 2020 to 2021, there was a 60 percent jump in possible marijuana toxicity in pets. As in Sherlock's case, it's common for animals to exhibit clinical signs soon (one to two hours) after a walk outside, though it can take up to four hours in some cases.

Anyone who's ever walked a dog on a New York sidewalk knows that to a canine, the

pavement is a veritable smorgasbord, its delights ranging from the merely olfactory to various comestibles attractive to human taste buds and . . . not. In short, walking your dog in this city is like asking any of us to run amok in Jean-Georges Vongerichten's new Tin Building food emporium, only it's full of signs screaming: Help yourself! It's all free!

Even if it took about a nanosecond for the emergency room vets to identify what was wrong with Sherlock, most dog owners are as ignorant as I was about this particular danger underfoot. To them I say, the sidewalks of New York are now a dispensary all their own, so if your dog suddenly starts to shudder and shake, it might be a good idea to think: "Maybe he ate the end of a joint off the pavement," before, as I did, "Maybe he ate a kuru-afflicted brain from Papua New Guinea."

And don't wait to figure it out on your own. According to Dr. Fox, it's a good idea for any animal with Sherlock's symptoms to get to the nearest veterinary emergency room.

Here's another good idea: Maybe people could use a little more care when smoking pot outdoors. Or let me put that a different way: Maybe people could please pick up their damn roaches off the sidewalk and throw them in the nearest garbage can instead of leaving them underfoot.

Hey, we're living in a divided nation, and there's so much we can't agree about. But dogs? Everybody loves dogs. Republicans love dogs. Democrats love dogs. Even Kyrsten Sinema loves dogs. So let's not, you know, poison them.

Alas, poor Sherlock. He has recovered fully, but a new era has begun in which he is obliged to wear a mesh muzzle every time he goes out for a walk. He doesn't like that one bit, but a little humiliation (for him) and inconvenience (for me) are far preferable to another night in the I.C.U. (for him), not to mention the bill (for me).



May 7, 2022

Dear Members of Sacramento City Council Law and Legislation Committee,

On behalf of Getting it Right from the Start, a program of the Public Health Institute, a 501c3 that has worked to promote public health and health equity in California for over 55 years, and which has long been active in Sacramento City and County, I write to express our opposition to the permitting of cannabis consumption lounges, or temporary events in the City of Sacramento. We also write to oppose the changes that will allow further corporitization of the cannabis industry.

For decades, public health activists fought to protect people from the health risks associated with smoking and with second-hand smoke and to promote clean indoor air. We oppose the permitting of cannabis consumption lounges as such an action by the City Council would undermine this progress and would increase health risks for the infants of employees exposed while pregnant, and may increase heart attacks, heart disease, stroke, respiratory problems and cancer for employees and customers. Employees would be at particular risk as they would breathe in second-hand smoke throughout their shifts.

California established many years ago, that employees have a right to a safe, smoke-free work environment, leading the nation in the protection of smoke-free air. This lead to one of the greatest advances in public health of the century, and contributed to large scale declines in heart disease. An entire generation of California youth has grown up in a smoke-free environment. That historic progress in smoke-free air, and in keeping restaurants and bars smoke-free is now threatened by proposals such as that under consideration, especially when combined with proposed state regulatory changes that would allow sale of food and beverages in on-site consumption lounges.

Evidence suggests that cannabis smoke and/or vapor may be even more harmful than tobacco smoke. Researchers have compared the pollution levels (as fine particulate matter in the air) when a user smokes a Marlboro tobacco cigarette to the pollution levels that occur when the user smokes cannabis in a joint, bong, and pipe, as well as when they vaporize cannabis.ⁱ They found that all the methods of cannabis consumption produced as much or more pollution than the tobacco cigarette; cannabis joints were the most polluting, producing 3.5 times more particulate matter than the tobacco cigarette. In another study that compared cannabis and tobacco smoke, cannabis smoke was found to have 20 times higher levels of ammonia and 3-5 times more hydrogen cyanide, some aromatic amines, nitrogen dioxide and nitric oxide.ⁱⁱ Secondhand cannabis smoke and vapor pollutes the air as much or more than tobacco. UCSF researchers have also found that cannabis smoke affected cardiac endothelial cells even more dramatically than tobacco smoke – they concluded: "One minute of exposure to marijuana SHS

establish safer legal access without increasing consumption, social normalization, or exposing workers to harm. More is not better, and tax revenues will be offset by harms in mental health, youth development, and education that come at great human and financial cost to families, employers and government.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on this important matter.

Sincerely,



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Secondhand Marijuana Smoke

"Smoke is smoke. Both tobacco and marijuana smoke impair blood vessel function similarly. People should avoid both, and governments who are protecting people against secondhand smoke exposure should include marijuana in those rules."

-Matthew Springer, cardiovascular researcher and Associate Professor of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco

Facts about secondhand marijuana smoke:

- Marijuana smoke is created by burning components of plants in the genus Cannabis.
- Secondhand marijuana smoke is a complex chemical mixture of smoke emitted from combusted marijuana and the smoke that is exhaled by the user.
- Secondhand marijuana smoke contains fine particulate matter that can be breathed deeply into the lungs.
- Secondhand marijuana smoke contains many of the same cancer-causing substances and toxic chemicals as secondhand tobacco smoke. Some of the known carcinogens or toxins present in marijuana smoke include: acetaldehyde, ammonia, arsenic, benzene, cadmium, chromium, formaldehyde, hydrogen cyanide, isoprene, lead, mercury, nickel, and quinoline.ⁱ
- Marijuana smoke contains tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the active chemical in cannabis.

Health risks of exposure to secondhand marijuana smoke:

Decades ago, people believed secondhand tobacco smoke presented no health risks to nonsmokers. Scientific research since that time changed this perception and led to smoke-free environments. Likewise, scientific research is demonstrating that breathing secondhand marijuana smoke indoors is dangerous to health and therefore should not be allowed in indoor spaces.

Peer-reviewed and published studies do indicate that exposure to secondhand marijuana smoke may have health and safety risks for the general public, especially due to its similar composition to secondhand tobacco smoke.

- Secondhand smoke from combusted marijuana contains fine particulate matter that can be breathed deeply into the lungs,ⁱⁱ which can cause lung irritation, asthma attacks, and makes respiratory infections more likely. Exposure to fine particulate matter can exacerbate health problems especially for people with respiratory conditions like asthma, bronchitis, or COPD.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Particulate levels from secondhand marijuana smoke are even higher than particulate levels from secondhand tobacco smoke. A study comparing indoor particulate matter 2.5 (PM2.5) levels from secondhand marijuana smoke and secondhand tobacco smoke concluded that "the average PM2.5 emission rate of the pre-rolled marijuana joints was found to be 3.5 times the average emission rate of Marlboro tobacco cigarettes, the most popular US cigarette brand." **Smoking a marijuana joint indoors can produce extremely high indoor PM2.5 concentrations, thereby exposing the public and workers to dangerous secondhand marijuana smoke emissions.**^{iv}

- Being near people who are using inhaled cannabis is hazardous to human health. In a dispensary that allowed marijuana/cannabis smoking, research scientists discovered that the average PM2.5 emissions was 840 ug/m³ over 9 visits, which exposed patrons and workers to air pollutant concentrations that are beyond hazardous levels.^v
- On-site consumption of cannabis using electric vaporizers, vape pens, and dab rigs produces a chemical aerosol that pollutes indoor air to unhealthy levels. This diminished air quality was observed when marijuana was not being combusted on-site. Researchers measured high levels of PM2.5 inside a marijuana retailer that allowed vaporizing, dabbing, and vaping marijuana - but did not allow smoking of marijuana or tobacco.^{vi}
- Researchers at the University of California at Berkeley studying fine particulate matter exposure found that cannabis bong smoking in the home generated **4 times greater PM2.5 concentrations** than cigarette or tobacco hookah (waterpipe) smoking.^{vii}
- In the first "whole-house" study of its kind, researchers measured both tobacco and marijuana secondhand smoke and found that PM2.5 concentrations from marijuana secondhand smoke were 4.4 times higher than emissions from secondhand tobacco smoke. Secondhand marijuana levels were higher than tobacco levels in every room of the house.^{viii}
- Significant amounts of mercury, cadmium, nickel, lead, hydrogen cyanide, and chromium, as well as 3 times the amount of ammonia, are found in mainstream marijuana smoke than is in tobacco smoke.^{ix}
- In 2009, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment added marijuana smoke to its Proposition 65 list of carcinogens and reproductive toxins, also known as the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986. It reported that **at least 33 individual constituents present in both marijuana smoke and tobacco smoke are Proposition 65 carcinogens.**^{x, xi}
- Secondhand smoke from marijuana has many of the same chemicals as smoke from tobacco, including those linked to lung cancer.^{xii}
- Secondhand marijuana exposure impairs blood vessel function. Published studies on rats show that thirty minutes of exposure to secondhand marijuana smoke at levels comparable to those found in restaurants that allow cigarette smoking led to substantial impairment of blood vessel function. Marijuana smoke exposure had a greater and longer-lasting effect on blood vessel function than exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke.^{xiii}
- One minute of exposure to marijuana SHS substantially impairs endothelial function in rats for at least 90 minutes, considerably longer than comparable impairment by tobacco SHS. The findings in rats suggest that SHS can exert similar adverse cardiovascular effects regardless of whether it is from tobacco or marijuana.^{xiv}
- Secondhand marijuana smoke and secondhand tobacco smoke is similar in many ways. More research is needed, but the current body of science shows that both tobacco and marijuana smoke have similar chemical composition and suggests that they may have harmful cardiovascular health effects, such as atherosclerosis (partially blocked arteries), heart attack, and stroke.^{xv}
- Particle concentrations from dabbing and vaporizing cannabis can create levels of indoor air pollution similar as those seen in extreme air pollution events like wildfires and severe industrial pollution. Exposure at these concentrations can cause cardiovascular and respiratory disease.^{xvi}



- People who are exposed to secondhand marijuana smoke can have detectable levels of THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) in their blood and urine.^{xvii}
- Marijuana also can be contaminated with mold, insecticides or other chemicals that may be released in secondhand smoke.^{xviii}

Including Marijuana Smoking in Smokefree Public Place and Workplace Laws:

- Everyone has the right to breathe smokefree air. Smokefree policies are designed to protect the public and all workers from exposure to the health hazards caused by exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke. The same should be true for secondhand marijuana smoke.
- The percent of U.S. adults who use marijuana more than doubled from 4.1% to 9.5% between 2001-2002 and 2012-2013,^{xix} which may also indicate an increase in exposure to secondhand marijuana smoke.
- The American Society for Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineering (ASHRAE) is the organization that develops engineering standards for building ventilation systems. ASHRAE now bases its ventilation standard for acceptable indoor air quality on an environment that is completely free from secondhand tobacco smoke, secondhand marijuana smoke, and emissions from electronic smoking devices.^{xx}
- To protect public health, improve consistency, and aid enforcement, smokefree laws for public places and workplaces should include tobacco as well as marijuana, whether it is smoked or aerosolized. Allowing marijuana smoking in places where smoking is now prohibited could undermine laws that protect the public from exposure to secondhand smoke. The Tobacco Control Legal Consortium issued an informative brief on Lessons from Tobacco Control for Marijuana Regulation.^{xxi}
- Smokefree policies provide incentives to quit smoking, help denormalize smoking behavior, and are particularly effective among youth and young adults who are vulnerable to visual cues and social norms of smoking. It is likely that smokefree policies for marijuana will have a similar effect.
- As of October 2022, 876 localities and 38 states/territories/commonwealths restrict marijuana use in some or all smokefree spaces. Of these, 468 localities and 23 states/territories/commonwealths prohibit smoking and vaping of recreational and medical marijuana in one or more of the following venues: non-hospitality workplaces, restaurants, bars, and/or gambling facilities.

Maintaining the Smokefree Gain from Industry Interference:

- The tobacco industry is setting its sights on the commercialization of marijuana and pushing for on-site consumption to once again normalize smoking and vaping in public, undermining decades of smokefree protections. Creating transparency about the relationships between the cannabis industry, related industries, and policymakers is essential to ensure appropriate regulation of cannabis products.

- An observational study found that nearly **half of lobbyists did not disclose that they represented the cannabis industry or interests**, which makes it difficult for people to track the industry's activity and spending. As the study notes, **"The cannabis industry has an interest in creating a regulatory environment which maximizes profits at the cost of public health, similar to the tobacco, alcohol, and food industries."** It is imperative for public health advocates to educate policymakers and the public about the cannabis industry's well-funded lobbying activities that aim to promote their profits over the public's wellbeing.

In the interest of public health, the use of combustible or aerosolized marijuana should be prohibited wherever tobacco smoking is prohibited.

ANR Foundation's Position on Exposure to Secondhand Marijuana Smoke:

Marijuana smoke is a form of indoor air pollution. Therefore, ANR, our lobbying organization, includes marijuana within the definition of smoking, and all of our model laws and policies include a prohibition on smoking marijuana wherever smoking of tobacco products is not allowed. Our organization does not have a position on whether marijuana should be legalized; we are committed to smokefree protections from secondhand smoke from tobacco products, marijuana and aerosol from electronic smoking devices.

Nobody should have to breathe secondhand marijuana smoke at work, in public, or where they live. We want healthy, smokefree air for workers and the public, products like marijuana and electronic smoking devices (which can be used to "vape" a wide range of substances, including marijuana and hash oil) must not be used in smokefree environments where others are forced to breathe the secondhand emissions.

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For more information, visit <https://nonsmokersrights.org/marijuana-smoke> or call us at 510-841-3032.

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